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NOTES AND NEWS.

IROQUOIAN MYTHOLOGIC NOTES.—In Iroquoian legendary and mythologic lore the most characteristic and remarkable heroes and heroines belong to a peculiar class. The Onondaga name for them is *te-ha-no-ä'-to'* for a male, and *te-ye-no-ä'-to'* for a female; while *ra'-tir'-här* for a male, and *ä'-tir'-här* for a female, are Tuskarora designations. The Tuskarora not infrequently use as substitutes for the last-mentioned terms, *nä-ru-nur'-hä'r* for a male, and *nä-yä-nur'-hä'r* for a female.

The Great Father and Mother of the race were of this class, although they were born and reared above cloud-land and on the upper side of the sky, thus showing that the ideas respecting these beings originated in remote antiquity. The etymology of these several terms appears to have been lost with the custom of which they are severally the names. Only conjectural and unsatisfactory reasons for the custom could be obtained by the writer from those who used them in the many legends and myths which he has collected in the past few years.

Before attempting to assign an etymology to the foregoing denotive terms, the striking features of the mode of life peculiar to the class of persons of which they are the names will be given.

A person assigned to this class (which appears to have been very small in number in every community) was most studiously "secreted" or "concealed" from the eyes of all persons, either in their own home or in that of some one near of kin, who lived alone and secluded. No one, with the exception of one or two of the blood relations of the person so "concealed," was ever allowed to see him or her. To this end, the "secreted" person was forced to lie in bed and to remain covered from head to foot, night and day, except when eating or attending to other necessities. An appropriate diet was also prescribed. Seclusion began with the earliest infancy and before any of the natural capacities of the child had developed sufficiently to reveal anything regarding the gifts and powers of the future man or woman. This seems to indicate that some prodigy attending the birth of the child was the criterion by which an infant was adjudged to be born into this class in question. At the appearance of the age of puberty the "secreted" person

was "mature," and could then enter into the enterprises for which his conjectured supernatural gifts fitted him. The data at hand for arriving at any definite conclusions in regard to the origin of this custom are meagre and undecisive.

The etymologies of the Tuskaroran terms *nā-ru-nur-hā'r* and *ra'-tir-hār* seem to point quite clearly to the rare and unusual fact of a child "born with a caul." The verb stems in both words, *-hā'r* and *-hār*, are both from one and the same root, *-hār* to "lay upon, put upon;" hence, in the perfect tense used with a present tense signification; it means to "have on, wear, or bear." The nominal stems *-nur-* and *-'tir-* of the two words seem to be closely connected with the stem *-tār-*, for a *t* and an *n* are permutable in the languages of the Iroquois. The stem *-tār-* is the base of the word *u-tār'-ě*, "spawn, placenta, caul, etc., etc." The nominal part *-nur-* is the base of the word *u-nur'-ě*, a plait or braid of husks, being evidently connected with *u-tur'-ě*, a "husk" or "sheath." The stem *-'tir-* is the base of *u-'tir'-ě*, which means at present "parturitive moaning," but originally the same as *u-tār'-ě*. So that if the foregoing identifications be correct the words *nā-ru-nur'-hā'r* and *ra'-tir'-hār* signified originally "he-has-on-caul." The fact that nature had "covered" differently from others the child so born would probably lead to the custom of keeping it covered after birth.

J. N. B. HEWITT.

A COLLECTION OF STONE IMPLEMENTS FROM THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.—Mr. S. V. Proudfit has presented to the Smithsonian Institution his entire collection of stone implements from the District of Columbia, and on April 15, 1890, he read before the Anthropological Society a paper submitted with the donation.

The collection is fairly typical of aboriginal handicraft as it is now found in the fields of the District, and includes axes, both grooved and ungrooved, polished and rough; arrow-heads, knives and scrapers, unfinished implements, chips and flakes from workshops and village sites, pottery, and soapstone vessels. Each piece was catalogued when collected, and a full descriptive catalogue accompanies the collection, together with a map showing the fields from which the relics were obtained.

The paper touches upon the conditions attendant upon the distribution of these remains in the Potomac valley, and considers at

some length questions bearing upon the relative antiquity of the chipped pebble-work from the workshops and elsewhere, with the conclusion that it belongs to the same period of culture that is represented in the historic Indian village sites of the District.

DRUM-TELEGRAPH OF THE CAMEROON NATIVES.—Das Ausland for February, 1889, *et seq.* has a very interesting article by Robert Müller on "Life and Occupations in the Cameroon," in which a curious instrument is thus described: A log is hollowed out and is divided along the transverse diameter by a bridge, upon which a drumstick is beaten to produce sounds of different tones. This rather unpromising musical instrument becomes of great importance as a means of communication, and may, in fact, be called a "drum-telegraph." The villages are situated comparatively close together, and by means of the drum news is communicated rapidly from one village to another. A regular drum-language has been invented, and this can be imitated with the mouth or beaten on the breast, so that conversation can be carried on by the natives in the presence of white men without the latter understanding it, though comprehending the spoken language. The drum also serves the ordinary purpose of an instrument to dance by, etc.

H. W. HENSHAW.

A MODIFICATION OF BROCA'S STEREOGRAPH.—Broca's stereograph is one of the most convenient instruments for making geometrical drawings of crania. It has, however, the disadvantage of being not quite exact on account of lack of stability of the frame and of looseness of its numerous joints. The principle underlying the construction of this instrument is very simple: A steel point which is kept vertically on a drawing board is made to follow the outlines and sutures of a cranium. The steel point is attached to a cast-iron frame, the opposite end of which carries a pencil, forming exactly the continuation of the axis of the steel point. When the steel point follows the outlines of the cranium the pencil draws a geometrical projection of the same lines. In Broca's instrument the drawing board stands vertically and consequently the steel point must be held horizontally, which requires a rather complicated arrangement for suspending and adjusting the frame holding the

point. By placing the drawing board horizontally this difficulty may be overcome, and the apparatus is not only more exact, but at the same time far less expensive. It may be described as a combination of Broca's stereograph and of Von Cohausen's craniograph, which latter instrument seems to have hardly ever been used. It consists of a large drawing board spanned by a brass bridge which is placed about three inches above the board. The strip of brass forming the bridge rests on two pieces of wood that are screwed to the sides of the board. The bridge carries the cranium. The drawing apparatus corresponds exactly to that of Broca's stereograph. The cast-iron frames, carrying the steel point and the pencil, are, however, attached to a heavy iron foot board which slides on four feet on the drawing board. It will be seen at once that all the objections to Broca's instrument arising from the looseness of its joints and the instability of its frame are thus overcome. Experiments made with the modified form of the instrument in the anthropological laboratory of Clark University have given very satisfactory results. The cranium is held in place on the bridge by means of lumps of clay, which serve also for adjusting it in the desired position. A slight modification of the same instrument may be used for studies of the endocranium. The steel point which is used for tracing the outlines of the cranium is removed. A horizontal steel point may be attached to the vertical arm of the drawing frame. Its point is exactly vertical above the pencil. This horizontal arm is introduced into the foramen magnum and touches the endocranium. The anterior end of the point is curved so that it can touch all points of the sagittal and of transversal cross sections of the skull. By following the surface of the endocranium the pencil will draw the outline of the same. Thus drawings of sections of the skull in any plane crossing the foramen magnum may be obtained.

F. BOAS.

PRIMITIVE GAMES.—Under this title, Mr. Everard F. im Thurn, the well-known ethnologist of British Guiana, gives (in *Timehri*, v. 3, n. s. pt. 2, Dec., 1889) a very interesting account of the games of the Indians of Guiana, based on his own observations. The paper is too long for reproduction, even in abstract. It will be found to well repay reading by those interested in the subject of games.

JOHN MURDOCH.

SACRED STONE ENCLOSURE OF THE FIJIANS.—A full and detailed account of the “Nanga of Viti-Leva” is given by Adolph B. Joske in *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* (V. 2, pt. 6, 1889, pp. 254–271). These curious stone enclosures, which were used for the celebration of rites similar to those of the Australian Bora and probably connected with the club or secret society found through all Melanesia, and called the Dukduk, were only discovered a few years ago, when the Rev. Lorimer Fison, a Wesleyan missionary, succeeded in getting a tolerably good account of its structure and of the rites connected with it. Mr. Joske had the good fortune to see three of these *Nanga* (or “beds”), though in ruined condition, and obtained from the older natives detailed descriptions of the Nanga rites.

The Nanga ceremonies were practiced only in a certain limited region in Viti-Leva, and were kept up as late as 1876 by the Kaithols, or highlanders, who at that date were subjugated by the British government. “With their subjugation everything was swept away which tended to keep alive the memory of old tradition. The lotu (Christianity) was professed by all, the ways of the coast tribes were adopted, and old fashions discarded, good and bad alike.”

It is fortunate that such careful observers have succeeded in rescuing so much information about this remarkable association which is of great interest in connection with the secret societies which are continually being discovered among savages elsewhere.

JOHN MURDOCH.

ELEPHANT MOUND.—In an article in Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters (1889) Mr. Peet discusses the so-called “Elephant Mounds.” He finds that the present condition of the original elephant mound is such as not to permit accurate measurements. His examination, however, convinced him that the proboscis attributed to the figure, upon which has chiefly rested its identification as an elephant, is due to washing of the sandy soil. The same conclusion had been reached previously by Professor Thomas from an examination and surveys made by assistants of the Bureau of Ethnology. Professor Thomas believes that the effigy in question was intended for a bear. Mr. Peet’s conclusion with reference to other so-called elephant mounds examined by him is that they represent bears or bisons.

H. W. HENSHAW.

EASTERN NEW GUINEA.—“The natives of St. Aigran do not appear to have any religious belief, nor to have troubled their heads about a future state. The interpreter told me that it was quite possible that white men existed somewhere after death, but that his people certainly did not. Their belief in the supernatural is confined to witchcraft, and the idea that no one can die except from the spells of some wizard of a hostile tribe is the cause of most of their wars. The dead are buried, but the head is sometimes afterwards exhumed and placed in a stone cairn. . . . Polygamy is allowed, but is not common. The usual price for a wife is a stone hatchet, shell ear-rings, and three pigs, which, although nearly as much as would be paid for the life of a warrior, is not exorbitant, considering that a wife cuts wood, draws water, and even plants the food on which her husband is to subsist.” (Basil Thompson, “Narration of an exploring expedition to the eastern part of New Guinea,” *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, vol. 5, no. 10, Oct., 1889, pp. 513-527.)

JOHN MURDOCH.

LANGUAGE OF THE MOSETENA INDIANS OF BOLIVIA.—M. Lucien Adam publishes (*Revue de Linguistique*, July, 1889) some grammatical notes on the language of this little tribe of Indians, who live near the headwaters of the River Beni, among the mountains of Central Bolivia. These notes are chiefly based on a sort of catechism published in 1834 by a Spanish missionary, Father Andres Herrero, in connection with vocabularies published in 1883 in the Kansas City Review by Mr. Edwin R. Heath. M. Adam states that the language is not related to any of the known Bolivian languages.

JOHN MURDOCH.

WEST AFRICAN MUSIC.—The governor of the British colony of Lagos, on the west coast of Africa, has just published an excellent article entitled “On the Melodies of the Volof, Mandingo, Ewe, Yoruba, and Houssa people of West Africa,” in the number of the Journal of the Manchester Geographical Society issued in March, 1890 (vol. 5, nos. 7-9). In this he gives twenty-two musical scores with words, and an interesting account of the occasions on which these songs are sung and of the musical instruments used.

JOHN MURDOCH.

THE WANYAMUESI.—Paul Reichard concludes his interesting account of these people in No. 5 of the last volume of *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin* (v. 24, 1889, pp. 304-331). In this article he describes the occupations and amusements of the little girls, having dealt with the boys in the preceding article, and then goes on to treat at length of the mental and moral characteristics of the people, their clothing, and ornaments. Particularly noticeable under the last head is his account of the sufferings the women endure in fitting on the tight armlets and anklets of twisted hair or metal. He then describes their daily occupations, their food, and the methods of preparing it, and closes with an account of the use of narcotics, tobacco, and hemp. The article is a model of ethnographic description and is written in a clear and entertaining style.

JOHN MURDOCH.

THE AMERICAN INDIANS.—Dr. Eugène Verrin has published a short paper on the American Indians ("Quelques notes ethnographiques et ethnographiques sur les Indiens de l'Amerique, Bull. Soc. d'Ethnographie, April, 1888, pp. 102-106). He accounts for the mesaticephalic skull of most of the Indians of the present time as the effect of the admixture with an originally dolicocephalic race of brachycephalic invaders, enumerating as probable admixtures the Canarians or Guanches, the Negroes, the Scandinavians, and the Japanese and Malays. After stating, without question, that the Indians are all rapidly decreasing in numbers, he goes on to mention a number of valuable gifts which civilization owes to the Indians. Among these he instances tobacco, chocolate, logwood, cochineal, arnotto, the tomato, and the potato.

JOHN MURDOCH.

MAYA MANUSCRIPTS.—A. Castaing publishes in the Bulletin de la Société d'ethnographie a review of the work done in deciphering the Maya manuscripts ("La littérature écrite de l'Antiquité Américaine et le déchiffrement des textes hiératiques Mayas," Novembre, 1888, pp. 289-292), beginning with the Landa Manuscript and the work of Brasseur de Bombourg and his followers, who he declares "did not gain the esteem which their efforts solicited." The new school beginning with Léon de Rosny in 1876 has obtained assured and decisive results.

JOHN MURDOCH.